



# Independence

## HEALTH SYSTEM

### TO MEDIA

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## **INDEPENDENCE HEALTH SYSTEM ADDS TO NATIONAL HONORS THROUGH LATEST RECOGNITION FOR HEART ATTACK CARE**

**GREENSBURG, PA, JULY 25, 2024** ... Independence Health System continues to receive national accolades for cardiovascular care, this time through the American Heart Association's Get With The Guidelines® – Coronary Artery Disease recognition program. The honors reflect ongoing adherence to protocols for caring for patients experiencing heart attacks of various degrees of severity. The System has been recognized by the Heart Association for exemplary stroke care.

Regarding heart health, Independence Westmoreland Hospital has received two distinct honors. The first is based on a two-year timeframe spanning calendar years 2022 and 2023. Here the hospital has received Gold recognition for offering rapid research-based care to people diagnosed with a heart attack known as a Non-ST

elevation myocardial infarction (NSTEMI).

Each year, more than 546,000 people in the United States experience this type of dangerous coronary event, caused by a partial blockage of blood flow to the heart. Like all heart attacks, this requires timely treatment to restore blood flow as quickly as possible. The AHA guidelines include specific recommendations for in-hospital care and cardiac rehabilitation post-discharge to help prevent a future heart attack.

Independence Westmoreland Hospital also has been honored with Get With The Guidelines® – Coronary Artery Disease STEMI Receiving Center Silver Plus recognition for its commitment to offering rapid, research-based care to people experiencing an ST elevation myocardial infarction (STEMI), known to be more severe and dangerous than other types of heart attacks. The Silver Plus honor is based on performance during calendar year 2023. The hospital is eligible for the Gold recognition when the criteria is sustained for two successive years.

Annually, about 285,000 people in the United States experience this type of heart attack, caused by a complete blockage in a coronary artery. Nearly 40% of people who go to the emergency room with acute coronary syndrome are diagnosed with a STEMI. Like all heart attacks, this requires timely treatment to restore blood flow as quickly as possible. Recognition as a STEMI Receiving Center is designed to showcase hospitals that provide 24/7 support for STEMI. STEMI Receiving Centers coordinate with a network of referring hospitals and emergency medical services to provide guideline-directed care.

“Effective and timely care is crucial for patients experiencing heart attack. The American Heart Association’s guidelines call for specific interventions for these patients both in-hospital and post-hospitalization,” said Abhinav Goyal, MD, MHS, FACC, FAHA, American Heart Association volunteer, professor in the Department of Cardiology at Emory School of Medicine with a joint appointment in the Department of Epidemiology and chief quality officer for the Emory Heart and Vascular Center. “Westmoreland Hospital is among the institutions recognized for their commitment to providing evidence-based STEMI and NSTEMI treatment and care coordination, ensuring the best outcomes for these patients.”

As an adjunct to these honors, Independence Westmoreland Hospital also

received the American Heart Association's Target: Type 2 Diabetes™ Honor Roll award. This additional designation demonstrates Westmoreland Hospital patients with Type 2 diabetes, who might be at higher risk for complications, receive the most up-to-date, evidence-based care when hospitalized due to heart attack.

"We are gratified to be recognized by the American Heart Association for our dedication to providing optimal care for heart attack patients," said Independence Health System interventional cardiologist Nevin Baker, DO, "Time is muscle, and when caring for cardiac patients, every minute counts. Every day, we put proven knowledge and guidelines to work so patients have the best possible chance of survival."

Independence Health System also is recognized among the nation's elite by the Society of Thoracic Surgeons for coronary surgical interventions when coronary artery bypass surgery is needed.

#### **About Get With The Guidelines®**

Get With The Guidelines® is the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association's hospital-based quality improvement program that provides hospitals with the latest research-based guidelines. Developed with the goal of saving lives and hastening recovery, Get With The Guidelines has touched the lives of more than 14 million patients since 2001. For more information, visit [heart.org](http://heart.org).

#### **About Independence Health System**

Nationally recognized for quality care, Independence Health System comprise Butler Memorial, Clarion, Frick, Latrobe and Westmoreland Hospitals with a combined bed count of 925. With more than 1,000 physicians and advanced practice providers and 7,300 employees, the System is now the third largest in western Pennsylvania serving a population base of 750,000 in a footprint spanning more than 10 counties.

The System includes tertiary programs that are rated among America's best for cardiac care and surgery by Healthgrades in its Top 100 and Top 50 designations, and one of only five in Pennsylvania to achieve a five-star rating in cardiac surgery. In similar fashion, the prestigious Society of Thoracic Surgeons (STS) bestowed its top three-star rating. Historically, less than 10 percent of programs within the STS data base achieve this elite standing. The hospitals of Independence Health System also have earned a host of accolades from such prestigious outlets and sources as US News and World Report, Newsweek Magazine, the American College of Radiology, the American College of Cardiology, the American College of Surgeons, the Joint Commission, Leapfrog and the American Heart/Stroke Association.

Locally owned and locally controlled, Independence Health System offers its patients low-cost, high-quality care across the care spectrum in such specialties as cardiology, cardiovascular and thoracic surgery, orthopedics and sports medicine, minimally invasive and robotic surgery, women's health and obstetrics, emergency medicine, behavioral health and primary care. Its network of outpatient centers sees more than 1.2 million visits annually. The homecare division further supports patients at all stages of life with home health and hospice services.

Independence Health System continues to change the healthcare landscape in western Pennsylvania by meeting patient needs through superb physician expertise, outstanding nursing, the latest in technology and programmatic depth.